

The dinner started off with a Piper-Heidsieck Champagne Brut NV. This NV Champagne from Farsons (RRP €53.48) consistently gets critic votes of 90/100 and over. I found it balanced with a delicate perlage and good acidity and a medium body. Particular aromas and flavours were of apple, pear and even mango. It had a decent persistence and went well with the canapes.



During the dinner we had a white Claude Riffault Sancerre Le Boucauds 2022 (IV Cellars RRP €33.40) to accompany the Bream and the prawn linguini and the pork was paired to a Dom Faiveley Marsannay Rouge 2020 (Farsons RRP €37.13).

This Sancerre is very popular in its region of production and the vineyard is considered one of the top properties. It regularly gets good scores from various critics, the average score for this vintage was 92/100. Harvested and sorted by hand. Fermentation is using its own yeasts and it is matured on its lees for 14 months. On the nose it reminded me of lemon verbena and citrus, on the palate it showed a strong minerality with a crispy freshness and flavours of pear and other stone fruits, citrus and herbs. The minerality on the finish, which was of good length, was quite prominent.

The Marsannay is produced by a prolific but reputable maker who keeps prices relatively low compared to smaller makers in the same DOC regions. This vintage has an average critics score of 90/100. 2020 was a solar vintage yet this Marsannay still shows a lot of freshness. Yields were low but the quality was excellent with grapes reaching a perfect degree of ripeness even though the harvest had to be earlier than usual. The grapes are harvested and sorted by hand and during fermentation there is daily pigeage to better extract colour, tannins and aromas from the grape skins. The wines are aged for 14 months in French oak barrels (30% new) On the nose, intense aromas of red fruits, particularly plums and on the palate there are again fruity notes with rich tannins and a medium long persistence.



With the strawberry dessert there was a Grüner Veltliner VDN from Domane Wachau (IV Cellars RRP €32.00) This is a Grüner Veltliner with a difference as it has its fermentation stopped by adding Wachau Veltliner brandy at around 60% with a final residual sugar content of approx. 90g. This dessert wine had a sweetness tempered by a fully body and spiciness. It is stored on its lees in wooden barrels the May of the next year to add more complexity. On the nose one noted warm fruit, herbs and a bit of smokiness. On the palate, it felt powerful and dense with a balance between fruit, sweetness and acid. The finish was very long.